

nos special projects

Fiscal Year 2005 Accomplishments



*“Enhancing the
performance and
capacity of NOAA’s
Ocean Service through
strategic problem
solving, integration,
and innovation.”*

Mission

To enhance the performance and capacity of NOAA's National Ocean Service and its partners through strategic problem solving, integration, and innovation.

Areas of Expertise

- ♦ Planning and Strategy Development
- ♦ Database and Software Engineering
- ♦ Web Site Design, Development, and Support
- ♦ GIS Development
- ♦ Coastal Resource Assessment
- ♦ Socioeconomic Monitoring and Analysis



Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Ocean Service



Foreword...

I am pleased to present this summary of Special Projects' major accomplishments for fiscal year 2005. Special Projects staff have worked with, and provided assistance to, a number of major NOAA-wide efforts, the National Ocean Service (NOS) Office of the Assistant Administrator, eight of the nine NOS Program and Staff Offices, and the Ecosystem Mission Goal Team and three of its programs. A total of 94 products or services, associated with 51 projects, are described in this summary. This includes 15 Web sites, 14 databases or Web-based applications, 14 strategy development or project planning initiatives, 12 facilitated work sessions, 12 reports and assessments, and six conference presentations.

Two highlights from the past year include Special Projects' work with the NOAA Incident Command Center and staff support to the Gulf of Mexico Alliance. Special Projects provided mapping and geographic information system (GIS) assistance to the NOAA Incident Command Center as it responded to the three devastating hurricanes (Katrina, Rita, and Wilma) that hit coastal areas of the Gulf of Mexico. We also provided support to NOAA's leadership in helping to launch the Gulf of Mexico Alliance, a major state-led regional ecosystem management initiative highlighted in the U.S. Ocean Action Plan. Both of these projects required a coordinated effort of several Special Projects' areas of expertise, and the resulting products and services have generated very tangible, "on-the-ground" applications.

One of the most important accomplishments in fiscal year 2005 was the successful incorporation of NOS' Web services group, the Technical Information Services Branch (or TISB), into Special Projects. By combining the Web site development skills of this group, the Internet database application and GIS skills within Special Projects, and the hardware and networking expertise of the Information Management Division of the NOS Management and Budget Office, NOS has created an extremely robust, integrated Web site development, production, and maintenance capability. This capability can help NOS Program Offices and partners to maximize the use of the Internet as a critical communication and data delivery tool.

In fiscal year 2006, Special Projects will continue to seek better ways to promote integration across NOS Program and Staff Offices and among the NOAA Mission Goal teams. Special Projects will also continue to assist its partners in creating innovative solutions to projects and requirements that contribute to the efficient execution of the NOS and NOAA mission.

Dan Farrow
Chief, Special Projects

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Introduction

About Special Projects

Special Projects, a unit within the NOS Management and Budget Office, offers technical and discipline-based support services that fall outside the expertise or resources of NOS Program Offices, creating a “quick response” capability for NOS to take advantage of high priority opportunities. A primary purpose of Special Projects is to enable NOS and NOAA to quickly respond to new opportunities or special needs that are important to meeting the mission of the agency.

Mission

The mission of Special Projects is to enhance the performance and capacity of NOS and its partners through strategic problem solving, integration, and innovation, and to more effectively and efficiently deliver products and services to the coastal community.

Areas of Expertise

Special Projects provides support services by offering assistance in six areas of expertise.

Planning and Strategy Development

Special Projects offers expertise and assistance in action plan development, strategic planning, process design, agenda and workshop design, and meeting facilitation.

Database and Software Engineering

Special Projects provides technical and operational support on the design, development, and implementation of static and dynamic Web applications, ASP.NET programming, relational database technology, metadata, and Web hosting.

GIS Development

Special Projects conducts spatial analysis and remote sensing support, ranging from producing display maps that graphically illustrate marine issues, to conducting sophisticated spatial analysis, to building Web-based interactive mapping sites.

Web Site Design, Development, and Support

Special Projects provides a fully integrated Web development team, offering services including Web site planning, content development, graphic design, technical development and support, and Web site hosting and maintenance.

Socioeconomic Monitoring and Analysis

Special Projects conducts marine-related socioeconomic research for a wide variety of applications and geographic areas, to demonstrate how socioeconomic information and analyses can foster more cooperative management processes.

Coastal Resource Assessment

Special Projects identifies issues and solutions, assembles and synthesizes data, evaluates and prioritizes options, and develops products that support quality coastal resource management.

About this Report

This report highlights major Special Projects' accomplishments during the 2005 fiscal year. For each project a primary contact name, background information, and a description of major project products or services are included. The report is organized by primary client.

To gain a more comprehensive picture of the role of Special Projects in advancing the NOS and NOAA mission, visit the Special Projects Web site. This site allows visitors to learn more about the projects represented in this report, as well as additional fiscal year 2005 projects not captured here. Visitors can also learn about projects that are currently active. To learn how Special Projects is assisting partners, visit us online at:
<http://specialprojects.nos.noaa.gov/>.

NOS MB SPECIAL PROJECTS

Home - About SP - Projects - Products - Expertise

Special Projects, a unit within the Ocean Service's Management and Budget Office, provides enterprise-level technical and discipline-based support services to help the NOS Assistant Administrator and NOS Program and Staff Offices meet new and existing priority requirements... ([more information](#))

Featured Project

Learn more about Special Projects' recent Web site release: [Spatial Trends in Coastal Socioeconomics \(STICS\)](#)

Planning and Strategy Development

Database and Software Engineering

GIS Development

Web Site Design, Development, and Support

Socioeconomic Monitoring and Analysis

Coastal Resource Assessment

U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

National Ocean Service, Management and Budget Office, Special Projects

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Services for NOAA

NOAA Incident Command Center Post-Hurricane Support

Contact: Robb Wright

Following Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma, the NOAA Incident Command Center served as NOAA's central coordination point for predictions, preparations, and response. Special Projects support to the Incident Command Center helped to ensure a consolidated NOAA response effort.

Daily Status Maps Special Projects produced daily status maps for each storm event and provided these maps to the NOAA Incident Command Center. The daily cartographic maps and charts showed the location and operational status of critical NOAA assets such as NOAA facilities, ships and planes, and Navigation Response Teams being deployed in the hurricane strike zone. These maps were an essential part of the daily briefings and documents produced for senior management at NOAA during post-hurricane recovery efforts.

GIS Application Special Projects created a Web-mapping site to allow Incident Command Center staff to view the locations of the storms in relation to NOAA staffed and non-staffed facilities and NOAA observation platforms. The site also includes many other layers that supported the objectives of the Incident Command Center.

Supporting Maps On an "as requested" basis, Special Projects produced maps and graphics for the three storm regions.

Poster In partnership with the Office of Coast Survey, Special Projects created the poster, "NOAA Hurricane Katrina and Rita Response: Emergency Hydrographic Surveys in Support of Reopening Ports and Waterways."

Support for the Gulf of Mexico Alliance

Contact: Brent Ache

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance is identified in the U.S. Ocean Action Plan as a regional partnership for action focused on five priority coastal and ocean issues identified by the Gulf States. These issues include water quality, wetland restoration, environmental education, habitat identification, and nutrient loading reductions. The Alliance will issue a Governors' Action Plan in March, 2006. NOAA serves as co-chair for a Federal Workgroup supporting the Gulf of Mexico Alliance.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Strategy Development | Special Projects served a critical role in strategy development activities associated with the development of the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Action Plan. |
| Outreach Materials | To increase awareness about federal efforts supporting the Gulf States, Special Projects created an informational fact sheet entitled, "Coordinating Federal Support for the Gulf of Mexico Alliance." This fact sheet describes the Gulf of Mexico Alliance and the associated Federal Workgroup, reviews the five priority coastal issues identified by the Alliance, and presents major milestones in the development of the Governors' Action Plan. |
| Web Site | Special Projects created the Federal Workgroup coordination Web site. This internal site provides Federal Workgroup representatives access to relevant background materials, recent versions of working documents, and contact information. |
| Workshop Facilitation | In cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Special Projects planned and hosted two meetings of the Federal Workgroup. These meetings focused on developing a coordinated federal response to state needs in resolving the identified priority issues and initiating a federal data coordination effort. The meetings were held in June and September. |

Ocean Science Initiative

Contact: Tom LaPointe

The Ocean Science Initiative is a far-reaching partnership of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History and NOAA. The overall initiative goal is to enhance ocean literacy throughout our nation. This goal will be accomplished through three elements: the Ocean Hall exhibit, the Ocean Web Portal, and the Ocean Science Institute.

Project Planning Special Projects represented NOS in the on-going development of the Ocean Hall exhibit design package. In the last year, the "35 percent" design package review was completed, as was most work on the "65 percent" design package.

NOS presented a design for the Ocean News Kiosk that will be in the exhibit hall. The design was accepted by the Smithsonian Museum and the NOAA extended team. Special Projects, working closely with NOS and NOAA partners, will lead the development of the kiosk.

Finally, NOS/Special Projects will lead NOAA in the development of the Ocean Web Portal, the official Web site of the Hall and the larger Smithsonian/NOAA Ocean Science Initiative. Development of the Web site will be accomplished by a Core Team of Smithsonian and NOAA staff members, a NOAA working group, and an NOS content team—all established in 2005. Also during the last year, Special Projects worked with partners to develop a preliminary content outline for the portal.

Committee on Ocean Policy Web Site Support

Contact: Davida Remer

On December 17, 2004, President George Bush established by Executive Order a Cabinet-level "Committee on Ocean Policy." This Committee, which is chaired by the Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality, is responsible for coordinating the activities of Executive Branch departments and agencies regarding ocean-related matters.

Web Site Special Projects provided technical support to the Council on Environmental Quality for the official Web site of the Committee on Ocean Policy. The site is dedicated to reporting the activities of the Committee. It replaces its predecessor, the Interagency Ocean Policy Group Web site.

<http://ocean.ceq.gov>

Integrated Ocean and Coastal Mapping Workshop Support

Contact: Kim Cohen

The U.S. Ocean Action Plan and pending legislation direct NOAA to implement a more coordinated and multidisciplinary mapping strategy. In response, NOAA is seeking to establish a comprehensive ocean and coastal mapping capability within the agency that can meet the broadest range of program needs and eliminate duplicative efforts. An integrated ocean and coastal mapping effort will encourage NOAA programs to identify common data requirements and strengthen partnerships, to increase the efficiency, consistency, and cost-effectiveness of NOAA's ocean and coastal mapping activities.

Strategy Development Special Projects assisted in critical strategy development activities associated with the NOAA integrated ocean and coastal mapping effort.

Workshop Facilitation Working with the Office of Coast Survey and NOS Office of the Assistant Administrator, Special Projects planned and facilitated a workshop to advance the development of an integrated ocean and coastal mapping effort within NOAA. The outputs of this workshop were used in the development of program baseline assessments in NOAA's Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution System (PPBES) process. The workshop was held in May, 2005.

Report Special Projects developed the final summary report for the integrated ocean and coastal mapping workshop held in May, 2005. This summary report was used to develop individual PPBES submissions, as well as the coordinated NOAA Integrated Ocean and Coastal Mapping Action Plan.

Integrated Ocean Observing System Support

Contact: Kim Cohen

The U.S. Ocean Action Plan supports the deployment of an Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) as a major U.S. contribution to the Global Earth Observing System of Systems (GEOSS). The White House has designated NOAA as the lead federal agency for implementation and administration of IOOS. Building upon and implementing Ocean Action Plan commitments related to IOOS and GEOSS requires careful planning and coordination.

Project Planning Special Projects assisted the NOS Technical Director and NOAA Integrated Observations Team staff with various Integrated Ocean Observing System-related requests. Specifically, Special Projects assisted in the development of internal and external Integrated Ocean Observing System briefings, budget analyses, and advanced year planning efforts.

Joint NOAA/Census Bureau Release of Coastal Population Report

Contact: Kristen Crossett

Special Projects released the report entitled, "Population Trends Along the Coastal United States: 1980-2008." This report uses U.S. Census Bureau data to present an overview of coastal population trends from 1980 to 2003 and projected changes in coastal population by 2008. The report provides coastal resource managers and stakeholders with information to enhance coastal management decision making.

Press Briefing To announce the release of the report, NOAA and the U.S. Census Bureau conducted a joint press briefing at NOAA Headquarters (Hoover Building). Media attending the briefing included the Associated Press and Washington Times. The report was covered by media outlets across the country.

Presentation Special Projects presented the poster entitled, "Population Trends Along the Coastal United States: 1980-2000," at the Coastal Zone '05 Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana.

NOAA Educational Partnership Program Web Site Support

Contact: Davida Remer

The NOAA Educational Partnership Program provides grant funding to selected Minority Serving Institutions, and scholarships to candidate students. The Program Web site is a resource for undergraduate and graduates students in minority serving academic institutions interesting in applying for funding.

Web Site Special Projects provided support for a complete redesign and reorganization of the NOAA Educational Partnership Program (EPP) Web site, to ensure that the site is best serving targeted users. In direct collaboration with EPP staff, Special Projects assisted in Web site planning, graphics arts, design and layout, and the development of a prototype version of the site. All content for the site was provided by EPP staff. The site was launched in June 2005.

Special Projects staff trained EPP staff so that they can update and maintain their site independently. Special Projects continues to provide support on an as needed basis.

<http://epp.noaa.gov>

NOAA Fleet Allocation System

Contact: Robby Wilson

NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO) operates a wide assortment of hydrographic survey, oceanographic research, and fisheries research vessels. To conduct a wide range of marine activities, including fisheries and coastal research, nautical charting, and long-range ocean and climate studies, scientists must request time aboard NOAA vessels. OMAO and Special Projects partnered to improve the efficiency, transparency, and timeliness of the process for managing requests for ship time on NOAA vessels.

Project Planning To manage requests for ship time and vessel allocations, Special Projects and NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO) began planning for an online, Web-based fleet allocation system. As initial steps, Special Projects and OMAO worked together to define:

- ♦ The workflow process of the current fleet allocation activities;
- ♦ The requirements for an on-line fleet allocation system that would support the defined process; and
- ♦ The minimum features an on-line fleet allocation system must provide to its users to improve the process meaningfully beyond the current approach.

NOAA Leadership Competencies Development Program

Contact: Tim Goodspeed

The NOAA Leadership Competencies Development Program (LCDP) is an 18-month program that provides a series of training and developmental experiences for NOAA individuals who have high potential for assuming leadership positions.

Staff Support In fiscal year 2005, the Deputy of Special Projects graduated from the fourth LCDP class. As part of his participation, he served as a Senior Analyst on the Ecosystem Goal Team from October 2004 through January 2005, served as a Senior Budget Analyst in the NOAA Budget Office, covering the NOS budget from February through July 2005, and served as assistant to the Director of the Beaufort Lab in North Carolina from August through October 2005.

NOAA Ocean Explorer Web Site

Contact: Mike Shelby

Special Projects works with NOAA's Office of Ocean Exploration to bring the public NOAA Ocean Explorer—an educational Internet offering for all who wish to learn about, discover, and virtually explore the ocean realm. The site provides public access to information on NOAA scientific and educational explorations and activities in the marine environment. Fiscal year 2005 marks the fifth year of bringing ocean expeditions to the public through the Ocean Explorer Web site.

Web Site Special Projects worked with NOAA's Office of Ocean Exploration to support the chronicle of eight signature ocean explorations in near real-time. Throughout the year 63 new topical essays, 110 exploration logs, and 200 videos were added to the site.

The Ocean Explorer Web site underwent a complete redesign, including a new introduction and puzzle and cascading style sheets for absolute placement, added control, and reduction of obsolete HTML code. Special Projects also added a new "For Fun" section that includes desktop wallpaper, a calendar of events, and an Ocean Challenge Puzzle. The education section of the Web site grew to include 201 lesson plans and the careers component grew to include 12 expert profiles. Also, Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feed sharing was implemented during the Lost City expedition. The Web site also remains as an archive for past expeditions.

In 2005, the site brought in 4.1 million unique visitors—a 55 percent increase over 2004 visits.

CD-ROM As a companion to the Ocean Explorer Web site, Special Projects produced a CD-ROM that captures the entire 2004 field season. Approximately 7,500 copies of the CD were distributed to educators and students throughout the year.

Database Web Application The Ocean Challenge Puzzle added to the Ocean Explorer Web site uses Macromedia Flash and question selection and the reveal of image pieces are controlled by a Web application that accesses a database.

<http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov>

NOAA Restoration Day 2005

Contact: Alison Hammer

NOAA Restoration Day is an annual, NOAA-wide opportunity for staff to work in the field for a day to restore coastal habitat in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Hands-on activities include growing and planting bay grass, restoring oyster reefs, removing invasive plants, and removing shoreline trash and debris. Restoration Day is a partnership between Special Projects, the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office, the NOAA Restoration Center, and several non-NOAA partners.

Project Planning Special Projects led the planning and coordination for NOAA Restoration Day 2005, which was held on June 14, at the Webster Field Annex, PAX Naval Air Station in St. Mary's County, Maryland. Approximately 120 NOAA staff, representing every line office, joined personnel from the U.S. Navy and St. Mary's College.

Presentation Special Projects delivered the presentation, "NOAA Restoration Day 2005: Bay Grass Growing," to NOAA staff interested in Chesapeake Bay restoration, specifically those wanting to grow bay grass in their offices. Tank supplies and instructions for growing grasses were provided during the workshop. These grasses were grown for three months until they were planted at the NOAA Restoration Day event. In 2005, there were nineteen tanks—fifteen more tanks than the year before. Seventeen tanks were set-up throughout the NOAA campus, one was kept at the Channel 7 News TV station, and one was hosted by a Maryland Congressional Member.

Web Site To help coordinate and raise awareness about the event, Special Projects updated and maintained the NOAA Restoration Day Web site. The site keeps NOAA volunteers informed about event details. It includes information to prepare for the event, logistics, bay grass growing instructions, and an extensive photo gallery.

<http://restorationday.noaa.gov>

NOAA Teacher at Sea Program Web Site Support

Contact: Davida Remer

The NOAA Teacher at Sea Program, managed by NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations, has provided opportunities for over 400 grammar and high school teachers to participate in research cruises. While at sea, the teachers provide a chronicle of mission cruises and their experiences, as well as formal lesson plans.

Web Site Special Projects, in collaboration with NOAA Teacher at Sea Program staff, completely redesigned the official Program Web site, which is the primary means of communicating teachers' work to students, other educators, and the public. Special Projects provided a new artistic treatment and a new way of organizing content to ease usability and also crafted the new site. The site was launched in October, 2005. After launch, Special Projects provided Teacher at Sea Program staff with training so that they can update and maintain the site independently. Special Projects continues to provide support on an as needed basis.

<http://teacheratsea.noaa.gov>

NOAA Workforce Management Office Support

Contact: Jerry Lau

The NOAA Leadership Competencies Development Program provides leadership training opportunities to senior NOAA employees and the NOAA Rotational Assignment Program provides junior NOAA employees with opportunities to spend three to six months in a different work environment learning new skills. Special Projects, in collaboration with NOAA's Workforce Management Program, provides database and Web services for these two programs.

Database Web Application In support of the NOAA Leadership Competencies Development Program, Special Projects developed an online application process for the program, allowing a more streamlined and efficient system for applying, evaluating, and selecting candidates.

In support of the NOAA Rotational Assignment Program, Special Projects collaborated with NOAA's Workforce Management Program to provide static informational content and current opportunities in a Web-enabled database. This advanced technology allows management to enter opportunities through an administrative interface and provides candidates with an online application process. This technology also streamlines the process for applicant evaluation and selection.

<http://lcdp.noaa.gov>
<http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/nrap/>

Selected Intranet Web Site Support

Contact: Davida Remer

Organizations throughout NOAA and NOS require Intranet sites to share information on projects and activities among participants in an efficient manner. Special Projects developed a number of these sites and continues to serve them on an ongoing basis. These limited access sites provide data and information related to a specific topic to interested users.

Web Site Special Projects supported Intranet Web sites for the NOAA Transition Management Team, the NOAA Ocean Council, the NOAA Coastal and Marine Resources Program, the NOS Observation Team, the NOS Policy and Planning Division on NOS Legislative and Congressional Relations, and the Gulf of Mexico Storm Surge Partnership Project.

Transition Management Team Automated Data Collection and Analysis

Contact: David Gietka

NOAA's Transition Management Team, formed in 2004, is charged with completing an assessment of how financial and administrative services are performed within NOAA's program offices. Through this assessment, NOAA is hoping to achieve an efficient and effective financial and administrative services program.

Database In support of NOAA's Transition Management Team effort, Special Projects developed a database that automatically converted data obtained through spreadsheets and combined it with information from the National Finance Center. The resulting database provides management decision support data on the location of staff as well as approximate full-time equivalent (FTE) effort spent on overhead or office activities. Special Projects conducted the analysis across 13 NOAA program offices, which included almost 2,500 FTEs.

U.S. Ocean Action Plan Commitments Tracker

Contact: Chris Clement

The U.S. Ocean Action Plan outlines activities to protect our nation's oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes and to help assure that these resources will be available to future generations. The Ocean Action Plan calls upon NOAA, as the nation's premier ocean agency, to lead many of the identified initiatives.

Database Special Projects created the U.S. Ocean Action Plan Commitments Database. This relational database stores progress tracking information about commitment action items and milestones related to the U.S. Ocean Action Plan.

Database Web Application Special Projects created the U.S. Ocean Action Plan Data Editing and Retrieval System, a Web application that allows editing and viewing of tracking data for each commitment in the U.S. Ocean Action Plan. Through the system, users can upload and download documents associated with each action item and related milestones. Several standard reports were also created to allow access to detailed information and associated documents for each commitment and to provide quick access to key tracking data.

Web Hosting

Contact: Lawrence Charters

The NOS Internet Publishing System is a consolidated Web farm and associated infrastructure, provided in support of several NOAA, Department of Commerce, and Executive Branch programs and projects.

Web Hosting Special Projects continued to manage the NOS Internet Publishing System. As part of this effort, three larger servers were added in 2005, to streamline operations and increase capacity.

Sites are hosted on the NOS Internet Publishing System for the following programs or offices: NOAA's National Ocean Service, Coral Reef Conservation Program, the NOAA Office of Exploration, the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program, NOAA's Coastal and Ocean Resource Economics, NOAA Ocean Explorer, the Marine Mammal Commission, and the Marine Protected Areas of the United States.

Several new sites were added to the system in 2005, including sites for the NOAA: A Legacy of Cooperative Conservation program, the National Space-Based Positioning, Navigation, and Timing Executive Committee, and the Council on Environmental Quality Committee on Ocean Policy.

Services for the Ecosystem Mission Goal

Planning for a Functional Ecosystem Approach to Management at NOAA

Contact: Brent Ache

The U.S. Ocean Action Plan firmly endorses the importance of focusing an ecosystem approach to management. While NOAA's Strategic Plan calls upon NOAA to take an ecosystem approach to management, successful implementation of such an approach is a challenge. Special Projects assisted the Ecosystem Goal Team in exploring how to implement a functional ecosystem approach to management, including development of organizational concepts, at NOAA.

Strategy Development Special Projects facilitated numerous planning meetings with a wide range of NOAA personnel in preparation for the workshop entitled, "Moving NOAA towards a Functional Ecosystem Approach to Management." While the two-day workshop took place in November, 2005, the bulk of planning and strategy development occurred in fiscal year 2005.

Coral Program

Coral Reef Information System Web Site Support

Contact: Davida Remer

NOAA's Coral Reef Information System (CoRIS) is a Web site designed to provide a single access point to all information and data arising from NOAA's Coral Reef Initiative. This site is a cooperative effort between the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service / National Oceanographic Data Center, the NOAA Central Library, and the NOAA Coral Reef Program Office. The CoRIS project was conceived in late fiscal year 2001, and formally launched in late fiscal year 2002. Fiscal year 2005 saw a significant increase in site use, with a 30-percent increase in visitors compared to fiscal year 2004.

Web Site In fiscal year 2005, Special Projects worked with partners to completely redesign the Coral Reef Information System (CoRIS) library. The new library allows users to access coral reef publications, documents, and Web sites from multiple databases. The new library also has a full query capability.

The CoRIS glossary was also updated with a 1,000 new terms. To simplify glossary updates, an administrative capability was developed that allows the glossary administrator to add terms and images directly into the database.

A new Coral Reefs Ecosystems theme was added to the About Coral Reefs section of the CoRIS site. The first essay in this theme, which will be launched in early 2006, focuses on the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands.

These offerings and the newly designed library provide a new look for CoRIS which is consistent with the original look and feel while taking advantage of contemporary Internet technology.

<http://coris.noaa.gov>

South Florida Coral Reef Ecosystem Mapping

Contact: Steve Rohmann

The South Florida Coral Reef Ecosystem Mapping project is a collaborative effort between NOAA and other federal, state, university, and non-government organizations to remap the shallow-water coral reef ecosystems of southern Florida. The project will expand and improve upon maps completed in 1998 of the Florida Keys region of Florida. The project will result in the best available, comprehensive, consistent, digital maps of southern Florida's coral ecosystems.

Workshop Facilitation Working with partners, Special Projects participated in two workshops that were convened in Florida to gather input on south Florida mapping requirements and priorities from over 90 representatives of federal, state, county, and local organizations. The results of these workshops were summarized in a mapping implementation plan (see below).

Implementation Plan "Mapping Southern Florida's Shallow-water Coral Ecosystems: An Implementation Plan," was released in June, 2005. The plan lays out priorities for mapping approximately 13,000 square kilometers of southern Florida coral ecosystems using a suite of image collection technologies and mapping techniques.

Habitat Restoration Program

NOAA Community-Based Restoration Program Constituents Meeting

Contact: Kim Cohen

The NOAA Community-based Restoration Program applies a "grass-roots" approach to restoration by working with communities in on-the-ground restoration of fishery habitats. The program emphasizes partnerships and collaborative strategies to restore NOAA trust resources and improve the environmental quality of local communities.

Workshop Facilitation Special Projects planned and facilitated a national workshop for the NOAA Restoration Center to solicit feedback regarding the Community-based Restoration Program's (CRP) revised guidelines and overall program effectiveness, evaluate CRP service delivery and technical assistance, and identify future programmatic priorities and restoration needs. The workshop was held in September, 2005. Special Projects also assisted with the development of the workshop report.

NOAA Restoration Portal Web Site

Contact: Alison Hammer

The NOAA Restoration Portal Web site provides centralized access to information about NOAA restoration programs, projects, and activities through a single point-of-entry. The portal is a dynamic gateway to publications, Web sites, audiovisual materials, and case studies. The site links directly to the NOAA Library Catalog by using new technology (Microsoft.NET framework), which helps keep it up-to-date.

Web Site & Database Web Application

Special Projects redesigned the dynamic pages and continued to maintain the NOAA Restoration Portal Web Site. The redesign effort included reformatting the dynamic pages to increase readability and updating content. As of 2005, there were 225 references in the system, an increase over the 181 references in 2004.

This effort was coordinated by Special Projects in partnership with the NOAA Central Library, NOS Office of Response and Restoration, and the NOAA Restoration Center.

<http://restoration.noaa.gov>

Marine Debris Program

Marine Debris Web Site

Contact: Davida Remer

The NOAA Marine Debris Program is undertaking a national and international effort focusing on identifying, removing, reducing, and preventing debris in the marine environment. The program is part of the NOAA Ecosystem Goal and is based in the Office of Response and Restoration.

Web Site

In response to a request from Capitol Hill to Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R) senior management, Special Projects collaborated with OR&R staff to develop a Web site for the Marine Debris Program in a very short time. Special Projects staff provided support in planning, graphic arts and design, writing styles, content organization, and development of a prototype site. OR&R staff and partners developed all content for the site.

After the initial Web site was completed, Special Projects trained program staff so that they can update and maintain the site independently. Special Projects continues to provide support on an as needed basis.

<http://marinedebris.noaa.gov>

Services for NOS

NOS Social Science Plan

Contact: Bob Leeworthy

At the request of the NOS Senior Management Council, the Coastal and Ocean Resource Economics team coordinated the development of an NOS Social Science Plan. The plan represents a comprehensive set of recommendations to build the social science capacity in NOS and to help NOAA achieve its Mission Goals.

Project Planning Working with social scientists from across NOS, Special Projects held a series of meetings to design a process for the coordination and integration of social science within NOS. This process involved the identification of NOS office social science needs, based on mission support; the prioritization of issues and needs across NOS offices and NOAA programs; and the prioritization and integration of the strategies needed to address these issues and needs.

Database Special Projects created a Web-enabled database system that allows NOS social scientists to input social science issues and needs information. The system includes two databases: one on projects and one on personnel. With this database system, social science information can be accessed geographically, functionally, and chronologically.

Report Special Projects coordinated a team of social scientists who used input from the NOS social science process mentioned above to produce a report (the "NOS Social Science Plan"). This two-volume report details the investments, personnel, and strategies required to address the prioritized NOS social science issues and needs. The report also includes a companion executive summary.

Establishing NOS Priorities in the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution System (PPBES) Process

Contact: Dan Farrow

The Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution System (PPBES) is the process NOAA has adopted to link NOAA's strategic vision with programmatic detail, budget development, and annual operating plans. Ensuring that NOS priorities are well represented in the NOAA budget requires a firm understanding of how the PPBES process works.

Workshop Facilitation Special Projects planned and facilitated a workshop entitled, "Improving How NOS Participates in the PPBES Process: Challenges, Solutions, and Integration Opportunities." The purpose of the workshop was to enable NOS senior leaders and key players in the PPBES process to better understand the process, how NOS currently participates in the process, how NOS can improve its participation, and what can be done to strengthen the overall PPBES process. The workshop was held in June, 2005.

As a follow-up to the first workshop, Special Projects planned and facilitated a second workshop entitled, "Improving the Process by which NOS Establishes and Advances its PPBES Priorities." The workshop was a strategy session to discuss how to most effectively advance NOS priorities leading into the fiscal year 2008 Program Planning phase. The workshop was held in September, 2005.

Report Special Projects produced a workshop summary report entitled, "Improving How NOS Participates in the PPBES Process: Challenges, Solutions, and Integration Opportunities."

National Ocean Service Web Site

Contact: John Paul Tolson

This is the official Web site of NOS. The site is organized around several topics related to NOS responsibilities in coastal and ocean science, technology, and management; NOS program offices, Web sites, publications, and outreach materials; and news of NOS science and technology. Special Projects works closely with NOS program and staff offices to ensure that the site highlights the areas where NOS works to serve the American public.

Web Site During 2005, Special Projects staff added overviews of height modernization, harmful algal blooms, and hydrographic surveying to the list of topics highlighted on the NOS Web site. Special Project staff, in consultation with all NOS program and staff offices, updated the topics, program offices, outreach, and Web site sections of the site.

The Discovery Center, the educational corner of the NOS Web site, was expanded by the addition of two discovery kits, one on Geodesy and one on Estuaries; a discovery story on the Prince William Sound oil spill; and numerous lesson plans on topics related to NOS science.

The site also supported supplementary content regarding NOS' role in unplanned and unforeseen events such as the 2005 New England Red Tide and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

<http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/welcome.html>

NOS Gulf of Mexico Partnership Projects

Contact: Kim Cohen

NOS funded two projects in the Gulf of Mexico region through its Partnership Program, to support the U.S. Ocean Action Plan Gulf of Mexico Regional Partnership. These projects will illustrate the scientific and socioeconomic value of ocean observations in integrated ocean management. The first project is intended to enhance the resilience of Gulf of Mexico coastal communities to storm surge and flooding. The second will advance monitoring and forecasting capabilities for harmful algal blooms and benefit public health and coastal economies.

Project Planning & Outreach Materials Special Projects provided coordination and outreach support for the two NOS Partnership Projects in the Gulf of Mexico region. Special Projects staff assisted with the development of internal and external outreach products including briefings and fact sheets.

Presentation Special Projects conceptualized and coordinated a panel at the Coastal Zone '05 conference, held in New Orleans in July, 2005, to highlight and gather feedback on both partnership projects.

Web Site Working with the NOAA Coastal Services Center, Special Projects created an internal planning Web site to allow storm surge team members to quickly locate relevant background materials, shared data, most recent versions of working documents, and contact information. The "Gulf of Mexico Storm Surge Partnership Project Web Site" was also developed to provide external partners and the public with access to project information and products.

<http://www.csc.noaa.gov/sspp/>

"Getting Your Feet Wet" Briefing Book

Contact: Emily Crum

"Getting Your Feet Wet, An Introduction to NOAA's National Ocean Service," is a briefing book that provides an overview of the personnel and budget allocation of the eight NOS program offices and two NOS staff offices. It also highlights the scope of NOS activities and NOAA's integrated approach in addressing ocean resource management issues.

Report Special Projects staff updated the NOS budget and personnel briefing book, "Getting Your Feet Wet," to reflect the fiscal year 2005 budget, as well as current personnel and program information, for each NOS program office. The report was distributed throughout NOS and NOAA and is posted on the NOS Web site.

National Survey on Recreation and the Environment

Contact: Bob Leeworthy

The National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, which dates back to 1960, is a cooperative effort between NOAA and the U.S. Forest Service to gather information on marine recreation participation in the United States. The survey was completed most recently in 2000, and was partially completed in 2005.

Reports With data from the 2000 survey, Special Projects completed a report based on forecasts of marine-related outdoor recreation. Special Projects also developed a companion fact sheet and CD-ROM that allows users to duplicate or create analyses similar to those presented in the report. Special Projects worked with the NOAA Coastal Services Center to create state-specific reports highlighting survey results.

Data Collection Working in cooperation several NOS offices, including the NOAA Coastal Services Center, the Office of Coast Survey, and the Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services, Special Projects created a series of survey “modules” that will be included in the next National Survey on Recreation and the Environment. Data collection for this survey has begun, with approximately 15,000 interviews completed.

NOS Employees Orientation Slide Presentation

Contact: Marina Kraus

The NOS Employees Orientation slide presentation was developed to provide incoming NOS employees with an overview of the organization. The NOS Deputy Assistant Administrator also uses the presentation in quarterly orientation meetings hosted by NOS headquarters.

Presentation Special Projects, in collaboration with NOS headquarters staff, completed the slide design and graphics and content for the slide presentation. Special Projects continues to work with NOS headquarters to ensure that the presentation reflects the current status of NOS management, programs, and budgets.

NOS Senior Management Council Strategic Planning Session Support

Contact: Brent Ache

The NOS Senior Management Council is composed of the NOS Office Directors and is chaired by the NOS Assistant Administrator. The council creates and implements the NOS programmatic vision and works to integrate programmatic functions, resulting in better service delivery to the nation.

- Strategy Development** Special Projects planned and facilitated multiple short sessions at NOS Senior Management Council meetings to identify key strategies to advance NOAA as a global leader in the integration of ocean management functions.
- Workshop Facilitation** Special Projects planned and coordinated an April NOS Senior Management Council retreat in New Orleans. The event included a field trip and meetings with NOAA stakeholders in coastal Louisiana. As a result of the retreat, six priority strategies were identified to help advance NOAA as a global leader in the integration of ocean management activities.

Social Science Scientific and Technical Support

Contact: Bob Leeworthy

Social science plays an important role in managing our nation's coastal and ocean resources. Special Projects provides social science expertise and technical support to NOS, NOAA, and NOAA partners due to its unique role in NOS.

- Reports** Special Projects economists wrote multiple reports and report sections in support of NOS and broader NOAA partners. These reports included the State of Coral Reefs report to Congress, a report on heritage values in National Marine Sanctuaries, and the NOAA Economics Statistics report.
- Strategy Development** To ensure a coordinated NOS response to a call from NOAA Program, Planning, and Integration (PPI) for social science data, Special Projects organized several meetings with NOS social scientists and other representatives from NOS offices and NOAA programs. The process involved determining what constitutes "social science" and identifying and compiling current NOS social science investments and personnel.
- Technical Support** Special Projects produced multiple products to address social science needs as they arose. Products developed included a book chapter, presentations, Web sites, panel participation, CD-ROMs, and others.

Spatial Trends in Coastal Socioeconomics (STICS) Web Site

Contact: Percy Pacheco

The Spatial Trends in Coastal Socioeconomics (STICS) Web site offers, in one easy-to-use application, demographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. The analysis of income and employment data from this information can provide useful insights into the socioeconomic trends in the nation's rapidly developing coastal regions, help managers make more informed decisions regarding program priorities, and enhance service delivery.

- Database Web Application** Special Projects developed a Data Download tool to allow users to choose the extent of the data for download when querying the STICS database. Special Projects also developed the Census 2000 Data Selection Mapping tool to allow users to view and download Census 2000 data tables at various geographic levels (i.e., county, ZIP code tabulation areas, voting districts, block groups, blocks, etc.) from a GIS ArcIMS Web site.
- Data Processing** Special Projects reformatted the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment 2000 database to allow users to access demographic environmental attitude, life-style, and other information on the STICS Web site.
- Presentations** To inform the coastal community about the STICS Web site, Special Projects staff presented and demonstrated the tool at several meetings throughout the year.
- “The Role of Socioeconomic Data in Integrated Coastal Management,” was presented as part of a dialogue session at the Coastal Zone '05 Conference held in New Orleans. This presentation outlined the suite of information and tools available to coastal managers from the STICS Web site.
- At the Seventh Annual SAS Government Executive Event, Special Projects staff provided a demonstration of a “Report Profile Tool” developed using SAS Web technology. The event, which was held in Washington, DC, was attended by many federal managers and representatives from all branches of the U.S. government.
- <http://stics.noaa.gov>

Web Hosting

Contact: Lawrence Charters

The NOS Internet Publishing System is a consolidated Web farm and associated infrastructure that supports NOS programs and projects. The system includes 140 prototyping and public sites and support services.

Web Hosting Special Projects continued to manage the NOS Internet Publishing System. In addition to site management and administration, Special Projects performed monthly and yearly statistical analyses of all NOS Web sites, with the results published at <http://webstats.nos.noaa.gov/>.

Between September and December of 2005, 51.5 trillion bytes of data, most of it high-resolution aerial survey photos of hurricane damage, were delivered by five sites hosted on the NOS Internet Publishing System.

In 2005, the NOS Internet Publishing System hosted two Web sites for the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science, three Web sites for the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, five Web sites for the National Marine Sanctuaries Program, and three Web sites for the Office of Response and Restoration. One Web site was also hosted in cooperation with the National Geodetic Survey.

Selected new Web sites added in 2005 include:

- ♦ Biogeography Data (<http://biogeo.noaa.gov/> (accessed via <http://ccma.nos.noaa.gov/about/biogeography/>)
- ♦ Coastal Indicators Information Exchange (<http://coastalindicators.noaa.gov/>)
- ♦ Encyclopedia of the National Marine Sanctuaries (<http://marinelife.noaa.gov>)

U.S. Caribbean Summit-to-Sea Watershed Characterization and Assessment

Contact: Steve Rohmann

The U.S. Caribbean Summit-to-Sea Watershed Characterization and Assessment is a joint project involving Special Projects, the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science/Center for Coastal Monitoring and Assessment, and the NOAA Coastal Services Center. The project uses accurately georeferenced Landsat imagery to characterize watershed-by-watershed changes in shallow-water benthic habitat cover and land use over time. The project also assesses the potential impacts of land use change on associated shallow-water coral ecosystems over time.

Assessment Special Projects and partners completed a series of watershed-scale analyses for St. Croix and the Parguera and Vieques regions of Puerto Rico. These analyses showed extensive changes in land use in some watersheds and that these changes have led to increases in the quantity of runoff and decreases in the quality of runoff over time. These alterations in runoff have been linked to modifications in benthic habitat distribution and condition in these areas.

DVD Working with project partners, Special Projects compiled and reproduced a DVD containing an extensive library of thematic data for the recent Land-based Sources of Pollution Conference on St. John, US Virgin Islands. While released in November 2005, the vast majority of analyses provided on the DVD were completed in fiscal year 2005.

Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services

Data Quality Workshop Support

Contact: Brent Ache

Quality Assurance of Real-Time Ocean Data (QARTOD) is a continuing multi-agency effort involving a series of workshops to establish general standards for real-time data quality assurance and control in preparation for the development of an Integrated Ocean Observing System.

Workshop Facilitation Special Projects assisted the Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services in planning and facilitating QARTOD II, a workshop to advance the quality assurance of real-time observation data. The purpose of this workshop was to define initial standards for *in situ* and remotely sensed measurements of waves and currents. Over 80 participants from federal and state governments, academia, and industry attended the workshop.

National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science

National Status and Trends Data Portal

Contact: Percy Pacheco

The National Status and Trends Program was established to determine the status of environmental quality in our nation's coastal and estuarine waters by monitoring contaminants in sediments, benthic fish, and bivalve tissues. The long-term nature of the dataset also allows scientists to track changes in coastal environmental quality over time.

- Web & GIS Application** Special Projects developed several applications for the National Status and Trends (NS&T) data portal. These applications include:
- ♦ a “Data Download Tool” that allows users to query and choose the extent of the NS&T data for download;
 - ♦ a “Comparison Tool” that allows users to compare bioeffect data between two different study areas;
 - ♦ an “Analyte Concentration Distribution Tool” that allows users to obtain contaminant concentration distribution information;
 - ♦ an “Analyte Query Tool” that allows users to map monitoring sites based on user-selected criteria;
 - ♦ a “Mapping Download Tool” that allows users to view monitoring sites and download summary tables; and
 - ♦ a “Mapping (ArcExplorer) Visualization Tool” that allows users to access site data in a geographic information system environment, as well as additional data layers from outside sources.

<http://nsandt.noaa.gov>

National Geodetic Survey

National Shoreline Data Content Standard

Contact: Robby Wilson

The location of our national shorelines is a baseline for legal boundaries, nautical charts, and commercial and natural-resource utilization and management. Current practices have led to a highly variable shoreline data infrastructure. The National Geodetic Survey was tasked with developing the National Shoreline Data Content Standard, to enhance the shoreline framework by providing technical guidance on shoreline semantics, data structures, and their relationships to builders and users of shoreline data.

Project Planning Special Projects worked with the National Geodetic Survey to develop a consistent “logical” and “physical” data model for a National Shoreline Data Content Standard. Special Projects represented NOS at several technical meetings and attended a NOAA Shoreline Workshop with other federal mapping representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. A consistent shoreline definition based on surveyed elevations points and referenced to any of the three types of vertical datums (tidal, ellipsoidal, and orthometric) was accepted by the group.

As a result of the meeting, a flexible shoreline data model and content standard was developed that supports both geographic and cartographic views of shoreline data. The results of the meetings were compiled and submitted to the Federal Geographic Data Commission Standards Working Group, where it is being considered as a data content and format data standard for all U.S. shoreline data.

National Marine Sanctuary Program

National Marine Sanctuary Program Annual Operating Plan Web-enabled Database

Contact: Bill Rowell

The National Marine Sanctuary System consists of 14 marine protected areas (including 13 national marine sanctuaries) that encompass more than 150,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters. Sanctuary site planning is coordinated between local sites and headquarters.

Web Site & Database Web Application	Special Projects designed, built, and deployed a Web-based interactive system for use by National Marine Sanctuary Program sites in planning annual budgets. The system enables each site to estimate activity costs and break costs down by a variety of accounting parameters. Multiple budget plans can also be produced for different scenarios. The system also allows headquarters staff to control the budget planning process by selectively locking parts of the database at different planning stages. The system also includes an <i>ad hoc</i> query capability.
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OSPNEY: Online Sanctuary Permitting, Reporting and Evaluation System

Contact: Nipa Parikh

The 14 sites managed by the National Marine Sanctuary Program issue several hundred permits a year for research, education, management, and other purposes. Having outgrown its existing permit tracking system, the program identified a need for a contemporary, Web-enabled database through which to better enter permit information, facilitate the creation and issuance of permits, and analyze permit statistics and trends.

Database Web Application	Special Projects completed the Web application, Online Sanctuary Permitting, Reporting and Evaluation System (OSPNEY). OSPNEY provides secure on-line data entry forms along with the functionality to create permits by extracting information directly from a database. Development of the application is ongoing.
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Resource and Undersea Threats Database

Contact: Tony Reyer

The Resources and Undersea Threats (RUST) program was developed as a management tool for the National Marine Sanctuary Program, to protect natural resources from spills and other threats.

Database Special Projects developed the Resources and Undersea Threats database, a national database containing information about submerged sources such as shipwrecks, pipelines, wellheads, and dumpsites whose contents, if released, could pose an environmental and/or socioeconomic threat to the surrounding area and/or coastline.

Database Web Application Special Projects created a Web application that provides secure on-line data entry forms and query capabilities for the Resource and Undersea Threats database. Several standard reports were also created to allow access to detailed information for each threat site and to provide quick access to key site data.

Socioeconomic Monitoring

Contact: Bob Leeworthy

Socioeconomic monitoring is a critical component of a complete monitoring program, the primary goal of which is to detect and document changes in sanctuary resource use patterns and their impact on the market and nonmarket economic values of sanctuary resources. The Coastal and Ocean Resource Economics team is involved in two socioeconomic monitoring efforts: one in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and one in the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

Reports Special Projects staff co-authored the paper, "Long-term trends in the recreational lobster fishery of Florida, United States: Landings, efforts, and implications for management," published in the New Zealand Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research. Staff also wrote the paper, "Can Artificial Reefs Alter Pressure on Adjacent Natural Reefs?" This paper will be published in the Bulletin of Marine Science.

Special Projects completed the "Year-Five Report on the Commercial Fishing Panels," and produced an executive summary and fact sheet describing the recreational spiny lobster bag limit analysis.

Workshop Facilitation Special Projects staff facilitated two workshops to determine priority socioeconomic monitoring issues for marine protected areas in the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

University of North Carolina, Coastal Studies Institute Board of Directors Strategic Planning Workshop Support

Contact: Alison Hammer

The University of North Carolina Coastal Studies Institute was founded in 2003, to conduct research, offer educational opportunities, and provide outreach in coastal and marine science and management to a wide variety of audiences in North Carolina and beyond.

Workshop Facilitation The board of directors for the University of North Carolina Coastal Studies Institute (CSI) requested facilitation assistance from Special Projects through the NOS National Marine Sanctuaries Program. Special Projects developed the process and agenda for the workshop, to provide an opportunity for the CSI board of directors to reach decisions on some major items affecting the CSI vision. Major workshop activities included: finalizing the revised CSI mission statement, determining focus areas and developing a five-year vision for each area, prioritizing focus areas, identifying outreach and communication actions, and determining next steps. Most workshop participants were interviewed via telephone prior to the retreat and interview information was synthesized and used as background information during workshop discussions.

Report Special Projects developed the final summary report for the UNC Coastal Studies Institute board of directors' workshop.

NOAA Coastal Services Center

NOS Data Explorer

Contact: Nipa Parikh

As a joint project between Special Projects and the NOAA Coastal Services Center, the NOS Data Explorer serves as a Web portal to obtain NOS spatial data. The site offers interactive mapping tools that allow users to locate NOS products in any area in the United States and its territories through a metadata catalog. Search results provide users with metadata records and links to Web sites with additional information. Specific data sets are also available on the site to view and download.

Web Site & GIS Application Although the NOS Data Explorer portal Web site was launched in 2004, development of the site is ongoing. Recent enhancements to the site include 19 new downloadable layers, over 100 metadata records, a faster download routine, and an "Identify Features" tool.

<http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/dataexplorer/welcome.html>

Ocean and Coastal Resource Management

Coos Bay Stakeholder Workshop Support

Contact: Kristen Crossett

A comprehensive hydrodynamic model of the Coos Bay Estuary in Oregon could be used in a wide range of activities, including research, restoration, port development, navigation, and emergency response. Before developing the model, National Estuarine Research Reserve System staff wanted to identify priority issues and associated information needs of stakeholders, as well as recommendations about model outputs and how they would be used.

Workshop Facilitation Special Projects assisted National Estuarine Research Reserve System staff in planning and conducting a workshop focused on the development of a hydrodynamic model for Coos Bay Estuary, Oregon. A multi-disciplinary team of technical experts met to define a strategy and identify specific requirements for development of an enhanced coastal observational system for the Coos Bay Estuary, to support a variety of stakeholder needs.

Report Special Projects assisted in the development of the report, “Enhanced Coastal Observational System and Predictive Hydrodynamic Model for Improved Management of the Coos Bay Estuary, Oregon.”

Training on Evaluating Effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas in the Caribbean

Contact: Lani Watson

There are many marine protected area sites in the Caribbean that are “paper parks,” meaning that some goals are laid out for these areas, but the large majority of sites do not have planned courses of action for achieving those goals. Developing management plans is a key step in building an effective system of marine protected areas in the Caribbean and Wider-Caribbean.

Workshop Facilitation Special Projects assisted with the planning and facilitation of a workshop focused on evaluating the effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Training was provided to national and international managers, academics, and non-governmental organizations, representing six jurisdictions and countries within the Wider Caribbean. Participants were presented with materials and methods for developing clear and measurable goals and objectives and indicators to evaluate MPA management were discussed.

The workshop was a partnership between NOS (Office of Coastal Resource Management/Coastal Programs Division, the International Program Office, and Special Projects), The Nature Conservancy, and The Ocean Conservancy.

U.S. Marine Managed Areas Inventory Enhancements

Contact: Lani Watson

The Marine Managed Areas Inventory database, which is a component of the Marine Protected Areas of the United States Web site, contains a wide range of information on marine managed area sites in the U.S., to help in developing a comprehensive summary of the nation's marine managed areas. NOAA, the Department of the Interior, and state staff are working together on the inventory.

Database & Web Application The "Explore the Inventory" component of the U.S. Marine Managed Areas Inventory Web site disseminates data on federal, state, commonwealth, and territorial marine managed areas in U.S. coastal, Great Lakes, and ocean waters to the public through an interactive interface. Special Projects enhanced and improved this site component by adding new features, including an A-Z listing of managed sites, canned queries to frequently asked questions, a custom query tool for advanced analysis of the data, and the capability to download the data.

<http://www3.mpa.gov/exploreinv/explore.aspx>

GIS Application Special Projects developed and launched the "Marine Managed Areas Inventory Atlas." The Atlas is an ArcIMS map service that allows users to spatially identify and query marine managed areas (MMAs) throughout the U.S. This is a tool to create custom maps of MMAs and to download MMA data for further analysis.

<http://gis.mpa.gov/website/mma/viewer.htm>

Data Collection Working with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the National Park Service (NPS), Special Projects completed data collection and entry for the U.S. Marine Managed Areas (MMA) Inventory. This effort included collecting general descriptive information, management and legal information, natural and cultural resource information, and activities and restrictions information. The fisheries sites included approximately 86 sites managed by NMFS. The NPS data featured 40 "Ocean Park" sites within the National Park system. This data collection provided complete information on all NMFS and NPS sites in the MMA Inventory.

Presentation & Poster Special Projects staff presented a talk and poster at the Coastal Zone '05 Conference in New Orleans. The presentation, "Exploring the U.S. MMA Inventory," provided an overview of tools that enable users to query, map, and download data on any marine managed areas (MMA) in the inventory. The poster, "Getting the Most Out of the U.S. Marine Managed Area Inventory," highlighted how the inventory can be used to provide a visual and quantitative understanding of the relationship between MMAs.

Poster Special Projects staff presented the poster, “U.S. Marine Managed Areas Inventory Atlas: A Tool for Visualizing Spatial Data,” at the Coastal Geotools ‘05 Conference in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The poster introduced new users to the marine managed areas ArcIMS map service, described the features available for custom mapping, and provided an example of technology that can be transferred to other types of data.

Report To keep marine managed area (MMA) inventory state partners informed of progress, Special Projects produced a quarterly MMA Newsletter. The newsletter featured articles about the status of data for each participating state, territory, and commonwealth; upcoming changes to the MMA Inventory or deadlines that many affect the states; and any other items of interest.

<http://www.mpa.gov/inventory/inventory.html>

Wilmington Special Area Management Plan Support

Contact: Brent Ache

Under the provisions of the Coastal Zone Management Act, the Delaware Coastal Programs received funding from NOAA to develop a Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) for the South Wilmington, Delaware area. A SAMP is a long-term comprehensive plan that encourages natural resource protection and coastal-dependent economic growth in coastal zone areas.

Strategy Development Working under the provisions of the Coastal Zone Management Act, Special Projects supported the Delaware Coastal Programs to develop a Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) for the revitalization of Southbridge/South Wilmington. Specifically, Special Projects developed a comprehensive socioeconomic profile of South Wilmington and assisted in overall planning activities for the initiative.

Report Special Projects authored the draft report, “South Wilmington Socioeconomic Profile.” The report presents a comprehensive socioeconomic snapshot of Southbridge/South Wilmington, Delaware.

Data Collection In partnership with the Delaware Coastal Programs and the City of Wilmington, Special Projects researched and collected data on human activities in South Wilmington. Data collected include demographic information such as population, education, and household characteristics; information on employment and income for residents and businesses in the area; information on current land use; inventories of residential development and public and social services available in South Wilmington; crime, voting, and vital statistics; and tax assess values for South Wilmington properties.

Office of Coast Survey

Gulf of Honduras Enhancing Navigational Safety Initiative Support

Contact: Percy Pacheco

The Gulf of Honduras project is an international effort to preserve the health of the coastal and marine ecosystems within the Gulf of Honduras by enhancing the prevention and control of maritime transport-related pollution in major ports and navigation lanes in the Gulf, improving navigational safety to avoid ship groundings and hazardous materials spills in the Gulf, and reducing the volume of pollution from land-based sources.

Workshop Facilitation Special Projects assisted with planning, organizing, and facilitating a workshop entitled, "Technical Workshop on Creation of Hydrographic Capacities," in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, in May, 2005. The workshop was held for the Electronic Chart Committee of the MesoAmerican-Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission, with the aim of developing a survey work plan and associated budget for the Gulf of Honduras project.

Report Special Projects developed and drafted the Gulf of Honduras Project Executive Summary, Hydrographic Activity Implementation Plan, hydrography fact sheets, and International Hydrographic Mandates. These documents were later circulated at meeting of the MesoAmerican Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission in Veracruz, Mexico.

Special Projects prepared a detailed five-year budget plan. It outlines expenses, by activity, in the areas of regional planning and coordination (e.g., workshops, meetings); national level institutional capacity building; and technical support for hydrographic surveys, training, paper chart/ENC production, and mariner environmental awareness.

Translation Special Projects translated several documents generated by the Electronic Chart Committee Task Group 1 (MesoAmerican Pilot Project) and Task Group 2 (ENC Production and Distribution) from English to Spanish and vice versa, for use at both workshops and on the MesoAmerican Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission Web site.

Web Site Special Projects developed the Electronic Chart Committee Web site to facilitate communications and organize materials being produced by the Electronic Chart Task Group 1 (MesoAmerican Pilot Project) and Task Group 2 (ENC Production and Distribution).

<http://www.iho-machc.org>

Protecting Corals, Saving Ships Project Support

Contact: Lani Watson

Maritime accidents as well as routine ship operations can cause significant loss or injury to coral reefs. The economic cost of such damage can be millions of dollars per incident. The goal of the Protecting Corals, Savings Ships project, which is funded by the Coral Grants Program, is to add habitat and regulatory information to Electronic Navigational Charts in order to further protect corals and save ships from groundings.

Project Planning Special Projects supported the development phase of the Protecting Corals, Saving Ships project by providing background and materials on Marine Protected Areas. Special Projects also facilitated a partnership between the Office of Coast Survey and the Marine Protected Area Center's Science Institute, to bring together several related activities to increase the likelihood of achieving project goals.

GIS Application Special Projects conducted a geographic information system analysis of Marine Managed Areas (MMAs) from the U.S. Marine Managed Areas Inventory that fall in the geographic scope of the project. This information helped determine the feasibility of including MMA information in the Electronic Navigational Charts for the pilot project in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

Office of Response and Restoration

Portfields

Contact: Brent Ache

Portfields is a NOAA-led federal interagency effort to revitalize port communities, with an emphasis on development of environmentally sound port facilities. Through a Federal Workgroup and state and local partnerships, revitalization efforts result in improved maritime transportation and important environmental, economic, social, and homeland security benefits. There are three Portfields Pilot ports: Bellingham, Washington; New Bedford, Massachusetts; and Tampa, Florida. Special Projects serves as a critical partner in the overall planning and process design activities associated with this initiative.

- Outreach Materials** Special Projects created a full-color brochure and series of three posters for outreach purposes. Both the brochure and the posters describe the Portfields partnership and highlight projects for each of the three pilot ports.
- Report** A full-color, year-two accomplishments report, entitled “Portfields: Charting a Course for Port Revitalization,” was released at the Brownfields 2005 conference in Denver, Colorado. The report highlights the Portfields partnership, describes accomplishments, and documents best management practices and innovative strategies that may be transferred to other ports.
- Video** Special Projects worked with partners to produce a 20-minute video, entitled “Portfields: Charting a Course for Port Revitalization.” The video was released to a wide audience during the film festival at the Brownfields 2005 conference in Denver, Colorado. The video highlights the Portfields initiative through visits to the three pilot ports, briefly touching on their history and challenges, the highlights of their Portfields experiences, and specific successful approaches and tools used to coordinate port community revitalization.

